

Halloween Safety Tips

Halloween is fast approaching. Halloween hours in Evansville will be on Wednesday October 31st, from 5pm-7pm. Evansville police officers will be out patrolling in full force this evening hoping to ensure a safe and enjoyable evening for all.

Halloween has been a fun-filled event throughout the state. Traditionally children will dress in costume and go door to door for Trick-or-Treat, communities will attend costume parties, bon fires, and jack-o-lantern carving.

Trick or Treating should be one of the great adventures of Halloween for kids. It should be a fun time, without trouble and pain, so following some easy tips can keep your child safe every Halloween. Here are some rules to share encouraging safety to ensure a happy and memorable time for all.

SAFETY

- Use reflective tape and carry a flashlight if going out after dark.
- Be sure that older children take friends and younger children are accompanied by a trusted adult when Trick-or-Treating.
- Accompany younger children to the door of every home approached.
- Teach children never to enter a home without prior permission from a parent or guardian.
- Teach children never to approach a vehicle, occupied or not, unless they know the owner and are accompanied by a parent or guardian.
- Remind your children how to cross a street properly. They should always look both ways before crossing the street and should only cross at corners or crosswalks. Make sure that if you have more than one child, they know to take the hand of the younger child when they cross a street.
- Teach children to never approach a home that is not well lit inside and outside.
- Families may want to organize or attend parties at home, in schools, or in community centers as a good alternative to Trick-or-Treating.
- Plan a safe route so parents know where their older kids will be at all times. Set a time for their return home. Make sure that your child is old enough and responsible enough to go out by themselves.
- Know the route your kids will be taking if you aren't going with them. Let them know that they are to check in with you every half hour, by phone or by stopping back at home. Make sure that they know not to deviate from the planned route so that you always know where they will be.
- Cell phones are everywhere now. Make sure that your child has a pre-programmed cell phone with him/her if they go out on Halloween night! Make sure that all important numbers are already there and ready for use.

- Make sure you set a time that your kids should be home by. Make sure they know how important it is for them to be home on time or to call immediately if something happens and they are going to be delayed.
- Know what other activities a child may be attending, such as parties, school or mall functions. If they are going to be at a friend's home, get the phone number and make sure that you've met the parents.
- Explain to kids of all ages the difference between tricks and vandalism. Vandalism is never acceptable. Throwing eggs at cars and houses is not acceptable. Someone has to clean it up and those responsible can also be arrested and punished. Remind kids how you would feel if someone did that to your house and how bad it would make you feel. Throwing eggs at a house may seem funny but they need to know the other side of the coin as well, that clean up and damages can ruin Halloween for everyone, and result in an arrest.

COSTUMES

- Please take time and care in choosing the appropriate costumes for your family. Ensure store-purchased costumes are flame resistant.
- Costumes made primarily of polyester or nylon fabric typically do not ignite from a small flame such as a candle and if they do, the resulting fire may burn slowly and may be readily extinguished. If you are making costumes from scratch, choose polyester or nylon fabrics for greater flame resistance
- Make sure Halloween costumes fit properly. Allow extra room for warm clothes to be worn underneath the costume while avoiding long, loose fitting costumes potentially posing a trip hazard or increasing the chances of being ignited by an open flame like a candle.
- Always supervise children as they go Trick-or-Treating, taking special care to avoid lit candles and jack-o-lanterns, high heat or flaming decorations.
- If a costume does catch fire, remember to "Stop, Drop and Roll." This serves to keep flames away from the upper body, neck and facial areas. It also helps to slow or reduce flame spread and smother the flames.

DECORATIONS

- Keep hay, straw, dried corn stalks and other decorations away from heat sources like hot lamps and candles.
- Keep open flames such as candles away from curtains, decorations or other objects that could catch fire.
- Never leave lit candles unattended.
- Any open flame can be potentially dangerous. Consider purchasing battery operated lights to place inside of jack-o-lanterns.

For more information about Halloween safety and child safety in general, you may contact/visit the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children at <http://www.missingkids.com>, and you may contact the Evansville Police Department at 882-2299.

Additional Halloween tips can be located on the Evansville Police Web Page at:

{English Version}:

<http://www.ci.evansville.wi.gov/documentlibrary/Police%20page/Halloween%20Safety%20Tips.pdf>

{Spanish Version:}

<http://www.ci.evansville.wi.gov/documentlibrary/Police%20page/Halloween%20Safety%20Tips%20%7BSpanish%7D.pdf>

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